Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 MANILA 04687 01 OF 02 221030Z
ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06
AID-05 TRSE-00 OMB-01 /067 W
----------081862 221047Z /11
R 220942Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY MANILA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3376

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 MANILA 4687

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, SHUM, RP
SUBJECT: LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS: OPPOSITION ASSESSMENT

1. SUMMARY. THE AMBASSADOR AND EMBOFFS HAD LUNCH MARCH 22 WITH GROUP OF PROMINENT OPPOSITIONISTS. PRESENT WERE FORMER SENATORS JOVITO SALONGA, GERARDO ROXAS, LORENZO TANADA, AND FRANCISCO RODRIGO, AS WELL AS PASTOR CIRILO RIGOS, FORMER FOREIGN SECRETARY S.P. LOPEZ, AND MRS. BENIGNO AQUINO. TANADA, WHO IS CAMPAIGN MANAGER FOR THE OPPOSITION LAKAS NG BAYAN (LABAN) TICKET, AND RODRIGO, THE LABAN DEPUTY CAMPAIGN MANAGER AND HIMSELF AN IBP CANDIDATE, EXUDED OPTIMISM ABOUT THE PROGRESS OF THE CAMPAIGN. SALONGA, WHO ARRANGED THE LUNCHEON, WAS LESS SANGUINE. END SUMMARY

2. RODRIGO SAID LABAN HAS A GOOD CHANCE OF WINNING IN MANILA PROVIDED THERE IS A CLEAN VOTE COUNT. HE SAID WITH A FAIR COUNT, LABAN MIGHT EVEN SWEEP ALL METRO MANILA SEATS. HE ESTIMATED THAT IF THE TRUE VOTE COUNT IS 60-40 IN FAVOR OF LABAN, THE GOVERNMENT MAY BE ABLE TO MANIPULATE THE FINAL RESULTS TO EXLUDE ANY LABAN CANDIDATES FROM WINNING. HOWEVER, IF THE LABAN MARGIN IS 70-30 OR GREATER, IT WILL BE VIRTUALLY IMPOSSIBLE FOR THE OUTCOME TO BE ALTERED.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 MANILA 04687 01 OF 02 221030Z

3. RODRIGO EMPHASIZED THAT EVEN IF THE LABAN CANDIDATES FARE BADLY IN THE POLLING, THEY WILL HAVE ACHIEVED MUCH MERELY BY SPEAKING OUT. TANADA SAID THEY HAVE NO ILLUSIONS ABOUT WINNING, BECAUSE MARCOS HAS ALL THE LEVERS OF POWER AT HIS COMMAND AND WILL DO ANYTHING TO WIN. BUT TANADA ALSO CITED THE BENEFICIAL EFFECTS OF THE CAMPAIGN ITSELF. HE NOTED THAT DURING THE FIRST

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

WEEKS OF THE CAMPAIGN, THEIR RALLIES DREW ONLY A HAND-
FUL OF TIMID SPECTATORS. BUT NOW THEY ARE DRAWING
LARGE, ENTHUSIASTIC CROWDS, THE PEOPLE REMAIN BEHIND
TO HEAR SPEECHES UNTIL THE WEE HOURS OF THE MORNING.
(LABAN IS NOW HOLDING NINE RALLIES AROUND THE CITY
EACH EVENING.)

4. RODRIGO AND TANADA CITED SEVERAL STRAW VOTES WHICH
INIDCATE LABAN IS WELL AHEAD IN METRO MANILA. A
COLLEGE EDITOR'S GUILD POLL AND LABAN SWEEPING MOST
OF THE 21 SEATS. A SURVEY OF GSIS EMPLOYEES SHOWED
THE OUTCOME 18-3 IN FAVOR OF LABAN. A CENTRAL BANK
EMPLOYEES SURBEY HAD SIMILAR RESULTS. TANADA NOTED
THAT THE LABAN SPEECHES INVARIABLY RECEIVE HEAVY
APPLAUSE. UNLIKE FURING OLD SOCIETY POLITICAL CAMPAIGNS,
NO ONE HAS BEEN ASKING FOR MONETARY HANDOUTS FROM THE
CANDIDATES. RODRIGO SAID TWO MEN EVEN CAME UP TO
HIM AFTER ONE OF HIS SPEECHES AND HANDED HIM ENVELOPES
CONTAINING DONATIONS TO THE LABAN CAUSE.

5. RODRIGO SAID MARCOS APPEARS TO BE "GETTING DESPERATE."
ONE INDICATIONOF THIS, HE SAID, IS THAT FORT BONIFACIO
HAS INFORMED HIM THAT AQUINO WILL NO LONGER BE PERMITTED
TO SEE OTHER LABAN CANDIDATES OR HIS LAWYERS. HE
INTERPRETED THIS AS A MOVE TO CUT AQUINO OFF FROM THE
OUTSIDE WORLD FOR THE DURATION OF THE CAMPAIGN. HE
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

SAID THAT AQUINO'S FAMILY APPARENTLY WILL CONTINUE TO
BE ALLOWED TO SEE HIM. MRS. AQUINO HAD AN APPOINTMENT
TO VISIT HER HUSBAND SCHEDULED FOR LATE AFTERNOON
MARCH 22.

6. RODRIGO SAID THE GOVERNMENT'S ATTEMPT TO LINK
AQUINO TO THE CIA WILL ACTUALLY HELP NINOY. HE SAID
THE FILIPINO PEOPLE ARE PRO-AMERICAN AND WILL LOOK
FAVORABLY ON THE ALLEGED CIA CONNECTION. MOREOVER,
THEY MAY REASON THAT IF THE CIA IS BACKING AQUINO,
HE MUST HAVE A REAL CHANCE TO WIN.

7. IN CONTRAST, SENATOR SALONGA, WHO IS BOYCOTTING
THE ELECTION, ESTIMATED PRIVATELY TO EMBOFFS AT THE
CONCLUSION OF THE LUNCHOEN THAT THE KBL WILL SWEEP
ALL 21 METRO MANILA SEATS THROUGH MASSIVE VOTE FRAUD.
HE SAID HE DID NOT DARE SAY THIS WITH RODRIGO PRESENT

CONFIDENTIAL

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 MANILA 04687 02 OF 02 221041Z
ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06
AID-05 TRSE-00 OMB-01 /067 W
----------081931 221047Z /11
R 220942Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY MANILA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3377

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 MANILA 4687

SO AS NOT TO DISCOURAGE HIM.

8. TANADA RELATED TO THE GROUP A NEW DEVELOPMENT WHICH WILL HURT THE LABAN CAUSE. HE SAID THE IGLESIA NI KRISTO (INK), WHOSE MEMBERS USUALLY VOTE EN MASSE THE WAY THEIR NATIONAL LEADERS DIRECTS, HAS DECIDED TO VOTE FOR 19 KBL CANDIDATES AND 2 LABAN CANDIDATES. MRS. AQUINO INTER-JECTED THAT THE TWO LABAN CANDIDATES WERE HER HUSBAND AND NEPTALI GONZALEZ. TANADA SAID THE INK'S NEW POSTURE IS A RESULT OF A RECENT MEETING OF INK NATIONAL LEADER MANOLO WITH MARCOS. SALONGA SPECULATED THAT THIS NEWS MAY ALREADY BE SUPERCEDED BY A SUBSEQUENT MARCOS-MANALO INTERVIEW IN WHICH THE INK LEADER MAY HAVE BEEN PERSUADED TO INSTRUCT HIS FLOCK TO VOTE STRAIGHT KBL. THE CONSENSUS OF THE GROUP WAS THAT THE INK CONTROLS ABOUT 300,000 VOTES IN METRO MANILA.

9. TANADA RAISED ANOTHER APOTENTIAL LABAN DIFFICULTY. HE SAID MANY VOTERS WHO ARE SYMPATHETIC TO THE OPPOSITION MAY BE RELUCTANT TO VOTE FOR LABAN CANDIDATES OUT OF FEAR THAT THE GOVERNMENT WILL SOMEHOW RETALIATE AGINST THEM. ROXAS ADVISED TANADA TO EXPLAIN CLEARLY TO LABAN SYMPATHIZERS THAT UNDER THE CURRENT VOTING PROCEDURES, BALLOTS OF INDIVIDUAL VOTERS CANNOT BE TRACED.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 MANILA 04687 02 OF 02 221041Z

10. THE GROUP OFFERED TWO EXPLANATIONS OF A RECENT STATEMENT BY COMELEC CHAIRMAN PEREX DEPLORING THAT A CERTAIN LABAN CANDIDATE SUPPOSEDLY ADVOCATED THE ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT MARCOS. ONE THEORY WAS THAT

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

THIS WAS A REFERENCE TO A JOKE ABOUT MARCOS WHICH JOAQUIN ROCES FREQUENTLY TELLS. TANADA SPECULATED THAT IT MIGHT BE REFERRING TO A PHRASE HE HIMSELF USES THAT EVEN MARCOS WILL HAVE TO DIE SOONER OR LATER.

11. AFTER THE AMBASSADOR LEFT, TANADA STAYED BEHIND FOR A FEW MINUTES TO ASK EMBOFFS TWO SPECIFIC QUESTIONS: 1) WHAT WILL BE THE REACTION OF THE UNITED STATES IF THE APRIL 7 ELECTION IS MARKED BY MASSIVE VOTE FRAUD AND MANIPULATION? 2) IF THE ELECTION TURNS OUT TO BE A FARCE, WHAT EFFECT WILL THIS HAVE ON VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE'S VISIT? EMBOFFS REPLIED TO THE FIRST QUESTION THAT THE US GOVERNMENT HAS REAPEATEDLY MADE KNOWN TO THE GOP ITS DESIRE THAT THE ELECTION BE FAIR AND CLEAN. WITH REGARD TO MONDALE'S VISIT, EMBOFFS REPLIED THAT THE CONDUCT OF THE ELECTION WOULD PROBABLY AFFECT THE CONTENT AND TONE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT'S DISCUSSIONS WITH MARCOS. THEY AVOIDED ANY SPECULATION OF WHETHER OR NOT A PATENTLY FRAUDULENT ELECTION COULD RESULT IN A POSTPONEMENT OF MONDALE'S VISIT.
NEWSOM

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS, INTELLIGENCE ASSESSMENTS, OPPOSITION PARTIES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 22 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978MANILA04687
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780126-0017
Format: TEL
From: MANILA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780338/aaaabfrb.tel
Line Count: 190
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 0e61c1bf-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23 feb 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3240278
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS: OPPOSITION ASSESSMENT
TAGS: PINT, SHUM, RP
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/0e61c1bf-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014